

Age 11

Child Development

Developmental Tasks

- To develop a sense of accomplishment, which centers around the ability to learn and apply skills, deal with peer competition, self-control, and greater strength.
- To develop and test values and beliefs, which guide present and future behaviors.
- To come to terms with and accept the dramatic changes in the body (e.g., development of breasts, muscles; voice changes; pubic and facial hair).

Indicators Related to Developmental Lag

- Excessive concerns about competition and performance, especially in school; extreme rebellion; teasing; whining; headaches; nervous stomach; ulcers; nervous tics; consistent procrastination; overdependence on caregivers for age-appropriate tasks; social isolation; lack of friends and involvements; few interests; inappropriate relationships with "older" people, e.g., teenagers; stealing; pathological lying; bedwetting; fire-setting.

Note: Although these tasks and indicators may be present during ages 7 to 12, each may be more observable at specific times.

Physical Development

Normal Characteristics	Suggested Behaviors for Effective Parenting
Is increasingly aware of body.	Answer questions about bodily changes openly and honestly.
Possibility of acting on sexual desires increases.	Be aware of where youth is and with whom; encourage group activities and discourage solo dating.
Girls begin to show secondary sex characteristics.	Ensure that girls understand menstruation. Both boys and girls need sexual education.
Boys are ahead of girls in endurance and muscular development. Rapid growth may mean large appetite but less energy.	Don't nag boys about food intake and seeming "laziness."
May show self-consciousness about learning new skills.	Provide support and encouragement for youth's quest for new skills. Don't minimize or dismiss his/her lack of confidence.

Intellectual Development

Normal Characteristics	Suggested Behaviors for Effective Parenting
Challenges adult knowledge; has increased ability to use logic.	Don't become defensive; child is not challenging your authority.
May have interest in earning money.	Problem solve with youth on ways to earn income.
Is critical of own artistic products.	Accept youth's feelings but try to help youth evaluate his/her works more objectively.
Is becoming interested in world and community; may like to participate in community activities.	Support interest in walkathons, helping neighbors, etc.

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Social Development

Normal Characteristics	Suggested Behaviors for Effective Parenting
Anger is common; resents being told what to do; rebels at routines.	Help child set the rules and decide own responsibilities. Give child opportunity to make decisions.
Often is moody; dramatizes and exaggerates own positions (e.g., "You're the worst mother in the world!").	Don't overreact to moodiness and exaggerated positions.
Experiences many fears, many worries, many tears.	Be understanding and supportive.

Emotional Development

Normal Characteristics	Suggested Behaviors for Effective Parenting
Anger is common; resents being told what to do; rebels at routines.	Help child set the rules and decide own responsibilities. Give child opportunity to make decisions.
Often is moody; dramatizes and exaggerates own positions (e.g., "You're the worst mother in the world!").	Don't overreact to moodiness and exaggerated positions.
Experiences many fears, many worries, many tears.	Be understanding and supportive.

Moral Development

Normal Characteristics	Suggested Behaviors for Effective Parenting
Has strong urge to conform to peer-group morals.	Assist child in examining morals of the group without condemnation. Recognize youth's need to belong to a peer group outside the family.
	Be aware of the values of the group and help the youngster understand the consequences of own choices among group values.